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SOURCE Zafer.ANALYZES STRENGTH, ROLE OF SATELLITE ARMIES

Savlet Aktug

All reports emanating from Eastern Europe state that the Soviets have begun to reorganize the Satellite armies and to strengthen them. Today, in Eastern Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria, large numbers of youths are being called into the army. These countries are all being converted into bases for future Soviet Army activity and are being prepared as a base of operations for future action. Everything possible is being done to assure standardization among the armies of the Satellite countries. The Soviet Army is being used as a model for the organization rules and regulations of these armies and for the larger units. Thus, in event of war, the divisions of the Satellite countries can be joined to the Soviet Army without difficulty. The high-ranking officers who will command these forces are already known. The northern sector will be under the command of Marshal Rokossovskiy, with the forces of Eastern Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia subject to his command. Marshal Bulganin will command the southern sector and will have under him the Soviet units now in the Balkans, together with Hungarian, Rumanian, and Bulgarian units.

Albania

Albania today is a completely occupied territory. The ground forces total only 30,000, and it is clear that these forces will not serve any purpose other than defense of their homeland. However, the air and naval base on Saseno Island are of primary strategic importance for Soviet submarines and naval aircraft. Some 3,000 Soviets are now working feverishly on the island to perfect the port and defense installations.

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Eastern Germany

The People's Police today totals 72,000 men organized as six infantry divisions, one armored division, and two fighter aircraft wings. It has about 100 tanks and 66 jet aircraft. The new program calls for raising the ground forces to 360,000 men by the end of 1951, organized as 12 infantry divisions, an armored division of 250 tanks, an air force of 400 planes, and various auxiliary units. The equipment for the army is taken from old German materiel which fell into Soviet hands during and after the war. The tanks are T-34 type which were used by the Soviets at the beginning of the war. The planes are Yak-15 jet aircraft. Former German officers constitute 52 percent of the officers of the new army. The political commissars, one of whom is attached to each unit, keep the army under close control.

Poland

Poland now has 300,000 men under arms. Reserves total 250,000. The organization of 24 infantry divisions has been completed and there are 20 reserve divisions, various border guard units, and possibly two armored divisions which could be called to arms at any moment. The air force is weak, consisting of motorized aircraft used by the USSR in the last war. Since Marshal Rokossovskiy took over command of the army, all anti-Soviet officers have been liquidated. However, the abolition of political commissars, tax reforms, and increased army food rations have led to his gaining support from the people.

Czechoslovakia

Czechoslovakia has the most modern and best-equipped army of all the Satellite countries. It has 15 infantry divisions, five armored divisions, and an air force of 500 to 600 fighter planes, including 200 jet planes. About 100 of the planes are old Messerschmitt 109's which have been newly repaired and re-equipped. The equipment of the ground forces has all been made within the country: the tanks at Skoda and the infantry weapons at Brno. However, the manufacture of all these weapons takes place under Soviet direction. For example, Nikolay Khvorinov is in charge of the manufacture of war material at Skoda. Research and operations of all factories manufacturing war equipment are controlled by Soviet technicians.

The present strength of the army is 160,000 men, and this figure will be increased to 210,000 in 1951. A violent purge has been effected among the officers, and pilots who served in the British Air Force especially have been dismissed from the service. The infantry forces soon will be completely mechanized, showing that the Czechoslovak Army will be assigned a completely aggressive task.

Hungary

Hungarian forces total 110,000 men, including four infantry divisions and one parachute division. The strength is expected to be increased to 220,000 during 1951, and the induction of men into the army is being speeded. Eight new infantry divisions and one new parachute division will be organized. All persons not considered politically reliable are assigned to labor division, which are used to construct fortifications along the Austrian and Yugoslav borders. The army has a great shortage of officers because the former officer personnel are considered fascists while the new suffer from lack of experience.

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Rumania

The present Rumanian Army totals 250,000 men, organized as 12 infantry divisions. Some of the troops serve as security units and others as border guards. The organization of the army has been directed entirely by Soviet specialists. There is no air force worthy of note. Tanks are few in number and their equipment is old. It is felt that in event of a war, the USSR would use Rumanian forces solely for occupation and police duty.

Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Army, presently numbering 150,000 men, is considered a perfect force by the Soviets. Soviet generals are the highest ranking commanders: Novikov commands the ground forces and Kinov is Chief of the General Staff. The army is equipped with Soviet weapons and materiel. There are eight partially motorized divisions. Border-guard divisions and a few engineer units are constructing fortified positions along the Greek and Yugoslav borders.

Bulgaria is considered the chief base for any action which might be undertaken against Tito. For this reason, the port of Varna has been converted into a Soviet naval base and it is rapidly being equipped as a modern port where war materiel from the USSR can be speedily unloaded and forwarded.

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